

COLONIAL.

Statistics of the Trade, Industry and Resources of Canada, and the other plantations in British America. By Henry Bliss, Esquire.

To plant vacant countries, acquired by conquest or discovery, to afford and exact mutual advantages, for their productions in our markets, and in theirs for our manufactures, and thus to create new and independent means of supplying our wants, multiplying our population, and extending our power, is, and for nearly two centuries has been, the Colonial System of Great Britain; with various modifications, indeed and occasional exceptions, bounties and prohibitions having now, in general, given way to such protecting duties as are sufficient for securing a decided preference to native industry, and at the same time, by the utmost, invention, frugality, and exertion.

An opinion, however, seems to be prevailing, that this system is founded in error, unapproved by experience, and supported only by prejudice and self-interest; in illustration of which position, no example is more frequently cited, than the trade and condition of the North American colonies. There are, who believe this doctrine exceedingly profound; there are, to whom it seems as fallacious and superficial. The present is not an attempt to solve the controversy, but rather to urge and aid investigation, as far, at least, as relates to the example just mentioned, the trade of the northern plantations in British America. The situation of these provinces is now becoming, in many respects, extremely critical. Internal dissension, which seems inseparable from the constitution of their government and society, has probably from recent changes in this and neighbouring countries, received a new impulse, and been carried, in some parts, to an unusual extremity. Claims are also advanced in that quarter by foreign powers, to dominion of land and water, utterly subversive of British interests; some of which claims are already asserted by force, and others, it is feared, may prove still more successful through unequal compromise. In this country, at the same moment, the whole Colonial System is threatened, with abandonment, and the staple trade of the Canadas seems first, destined to be put without the pale of protection. Yet the natural advantages of those colonies have of late been made so much better known, and more available; their population has been so rapidly augmented by a tide of emigration, diffusing industry and capital throughout their forests; the resources of the country have been so far developed, and means of communication so greatly improved; that if the present system of Colonial policy could be maintained, a few years must witness an immense advancement in the career of prosperity, which is just opening to those possessions, and would demonstrate their value to be as the right arm of power and wealth to the British empire.

It is, therefore, the most desirable, at the present moment, to ascertain the position in which those dominions, commonly called The Canadas, now stand; and as far as relates to their trade, industry, and resources, such is the object here proposed. In which pursuit, though there is far less reason to be satisfied with the information within reach, than to regret what seems unattainable, enough may still be collected to create surprise and deserve consideration. The opponent of Colonial trade and policy cannot be too well informed of what it is they are about, and what the magnitude, the dependence, and the importance of that, which they are seeking to destroy. They may better learn to estimate the responsibility they have undertaken, and perhaps begin to doubt, whether it be so certain, that the system they would substitute will produce results equivalent to what they would supplant. The statistics here collected may also serve as a point of comparison, both with the past, and the future. With the past, they present proofs of increase and prosperity rarely exceeded in any country; with the future, they will exhibit what concerns those who are to direct their trade, and industry and destiny, to consider. That the Canadian provinces will become a rich, populous, and powerful country, is certain. No minister, no policy, can prevent that. But whether that wealth, and population, and power, shall be British, is for the wisdom of Government and Parliament to determine. May it not be hoped, that the new constituents, and their representatives, who have now succeeded to power, will make it a point of honor and of pride, not to suffer the empire of their country to receive any detriment under their authority, not a single island to be lost, not one colony severed, not an inch of frontier or of fishery usurped, nor any source of wealth or industry to decay; lest it should be written to posterity, that a Reformed Parliament knew not even to sustain and preserve that greatness, which the Bourbons had been able to acquire? What policy will be henceforth pursued, or what will be made of the Colonial, as of other the British dominions, it is indeed uncertain; but of the Canadian Provinces as now delivered into the hands of new rulers, the commercial condition and resources, and the effects and advantages of the colonial system, are here to be reviewed.

POPULATION AND EMIGRATION.

The first act, and principal of Colonial economy is emigration, and the vast extent of unoccupied lands, the fertility of their soil, convenience of situation, and salubrity of climate, in the northern plantations, taken in conjunction with the superabundant population and want of em-

ployment in the United Kingdom, present one of the most obvious and important advantages of the policy and empire of Great Britain.

The whole surface of the British dominions in this quarter is computed to comprehend about 3,400,000 square miles of land, of which not more than 126,500 have as yet been explored.—The number of acres occupied or granted amounts about 27,000,000. Of these, 4,000,000 may be cultivated, and peopled with upwards of 1,200,000 inhabitants. Twenty-three million acres of crown lands and it seems as many more of private property, are available for immediate culture and settlement by emigration.

The question, how many emigrants have passed over to the United States, has been often asked, and as variously answered, but seems generally believed to have formerly exceeded one half, and been lately less than a fourth. But as neither the voyage from the United Kingdom to Quebec, nor the journey from Quebec to the western districts of the United States, is shorter or cheaper, than by way of New York, it would be singular if many emigrants, whose destination was to that country, should prefer the longer, dearer, and perhaps more perilous route. Some American statistics will contribute much to a better solution of this question. By their last census it appears that there were in the United States but 53,655 foreigners not naturalized. As no foreigner can be naturalized until he has resided there five years, supposing all who arrive were naturalized as soon as possible, and that transient persons are not included in the census, still the numbers of emigrants and settlers for a period of five years past could not have exceeded 53,655, which gives an average of 10,731 annually. The American returns of customs show the average of strangers, arriving by sea during the last twenty years to have been about 7500, nine-tenths of whom are from the United Kingdom.* This would reduce the number who go over through Canada, to about 3231 persons; and though colonial accounts make this number greater, yet the emigrants, who go out through the United States into the colonies will probably equal this difference.

The author after enumerating the number of emigrants, and places of their departure goes on to observe:—

Upon the whole, therefore, as parliamentary returns upon this subject are known to be very defective, and the Colonial accounts are limited to Quebec, and are even thought below the full number landed there, the emigrants included in those statements, who have gone over to the American territories, are not probably more, than those not included, who have remained in the British provinces, having either arrived at the lower ports, or entered Canada through the United States; so that the whole, who have settled in the Colonies during the last twenty years, may be fairly set down as above 300,000 souls.

Of a truth, the greatest events, whether in the political or natural world, are not always those, which make the greatest noise, or engage most attention. The scene of these transactions is remote, the circumstances detached, no observation can comprehend them, no discription represent, and few have the imagination to conceive the real nature of what the figures foregoing attest. But if justly considered, there has not occurred in the Colonies, nor perhaps in the United Kingdom, during the last two years, an act more worthy of wonder and praise, for the boldness of enterprise, and importance of results in the British empire and the human race, than this voluntary, fortuitous, unassisted, and unexampled, emigration. By gradual and silent, but constant and increasing progress, this operation has been going on, till effects are now produced by it in one year, which formerly required half a century to accomplish. Colonies are planted or augmented, the foundations of a mighty people are laid, the wilderness is made to blossom like gardens by the river side, and the wild and fertile regions of the earth are subdued yearly and daily, and replenished with industry and enjoyment; and yet there is room.—Although there are among us some, who, as if afraid to trust the Great Author of Nature with the administration even of this single planet, contend that he has made for it laws of human propagation incompatible with those of human subsistence, and that the increase of population is at variance with the capabilities of the physical world. There are some, who, with these facts before them, would rather have us renounce obedience to the first and great commandment both of nature and revelation, rather than the faith of their own dogmas. And there are others, who talk of the burthen of Colonies, and propose to cast off the incumbrance, apparently because the grand circumstances, in which they find them, exceed their capacities, or disagree with their theories. While such persons have been exceedingly industrious in reviving either a theory of commerce, agitated in the seventeenth century, but in terms so intelligible it was speedily exploded, or the error of a far older fallacy, (Achilles and the Tortoise,) the converse of whose foot-race is now applied to population and subsistence; while these disputants have been endeavouring to increase our industry by lessening its objects, and by employing foreign labourers, give subsistence to our own; while they have made it evident that the arithmetical progression can never keep pace with geometrical, and have only left it doubtful whether there be in this any analogy to the increase of mankind and their sustenance, or, if any, whether

it be such as assumed; in the mean time, three hundred thousand persons, like the philosopher of old, have cut short the controversy, by rising up and migrating, where they have found no lack of employment, and have created abundant subsistence and wealth. Within even two years above 100,000 of our countrymen, finding themselves a burthen and a care in these kingdoms, have had the fortitude and enterprise to rise up and abandon their native seats, to pass an ocean, enter upon the unknown and untrodden forests of Canada, and have there formed the nucleus of a great community, have planted the germs of towns and villages, and of all the arts and comforts of civilized life.—The child who, born at this season, shall be so strong, as to come to four score years of age, will live to know the descendants of these emigrants have multiplied in happiness and plenty to the number of several millions of souls. Yet the lands they are there tilling will in one year give them thirty for one; and the cod fish, to which, as was said of swine, nature seems to have given life as a kind of salt to preserve them for the food of man; will reproduce more than nine millions successively, and come in shoals with its fry on to the shores, and into the nets of the fishers; and the forest in which they dwell may, by an axe and a saw, be converted into, or exchanged for, the beautiful textures of England, and all the luxuries of the tropics and the east; but neither their forests nor their fisheries, nor their agriculture, have been made available or exchangeable, nor even the country habitable, by any other system than the Colonial.

*Hinton's United States.

Let these circumstances be viewed as merely a relief to the surplus and suffering labourers in this country, and the immediate and pecuniary benefit, which can be told and counted, will appear less important indeed, but perhaps more attractive to the tastes of some economists.—Three hundred thousand emigrants in twenty years give an average of fifteen thousand annually. Had these remained in the United Kingdom, they must either have been supported at the public cost, or have displaced as many labourers, who would have had no other resource, than charity, want, or crime; unless, indeed, it can be shown in what one branch of industry here, the whole supplies of labour have not exceeded the demand. The subsistence then of this number, at five shillings a week, or £195,000 a year, (if the average lives of such persons as usually emigrate may be taken at thirty years,) would be worth the price of £3,315,000, which, multiplied by the twenty years, equals a capital of £66,300,000.

These things put together are great and marvellous events, to have effected, or advised, or contributed to, which would transmit to posterity the name of any Minister as the benefactor of his country and mankind; as, to have misunderstood the nature, and importance, and mistaken the cause and dependence of this movement, would prove the last misfortune to his fame. These are certainly great events, and great interests, on which not only millions unborn are deeply dependant, but millions in existence, for such are the numbers of the present generation, who either have already emigrated, or may hereafter emigrate, or remaining at home be benefited by the removal of others.—And if these classes, both at home and in the Colonies, possessed that organ which they ought to have, in the feeling and conviction of all public men, but which they being unassociated with any sect or faction, unhappily have not, the voice of their complaint against the measures, which are impending, would perhaps be raised to those who govern their industry and destinies, and their case stated in some such manner as this:—

We are many, poor, industrious, and loyal men, who desire nothing better than to work hard while we are strong, that we may eat and not die, for unless we get food, we shall not long have strength to work. But, as we can find no employment here, or so little as to promise nothing but alms or want, we have resolved, not indeed to abandon our country, but to emigrate to her Colonies, where, holding the same allegiance, and enjoying, as we hope, the same protection, we shall find the best means and materials of producing precisely the very things which are most wanted at home. There we have before us a rich and almost interminable forest, covering an equal extent of the best soils. At home you demanded of us wood, but the land was all devoted to more profitable culture; you demanded corn, but the land could not produce a sufficient supply; now we can give you abundance of both. Let us in Canada be your husbandmen, and the hewers of your timber, and the sawyers of your deals. We are told, that you have some unwillingness to give us this work, because the Danes or Poles will do it cheaper. Is it then the same thing, whether the woollens, cottons, and other manufactures you give in return, clothe their backs or ours? Do not take the raiment from your children, and cast it to the Danes. We do hope and trust you will give us the refusal of this labour, if indeed we are still British subjects, and members of the same community. The Poles, they say, will do it cheaper; but will the Poles receive your poor emigrants, and give them employment and lands? Will the Poles not only work, but fight for you? Will they identify their industry, wealth, lives, and independence with yours? But the Poles will not do it cheaper, if this is to be paramount to all other ties and interests, they can do it cheaper, than we are willing than we are endeavouring to do; only they are nearer to your market, and carry thither at less cost. But you cannot wish to see your shipping supplanted by theirs, or your saamen de-

pressed to the same condition. We seek no monopoly; we ask only for preference and protection; under which you, instead of paying dearer, have created by your colonies such a competition, that wood was never before supplied to you at so low a profit, nor probably could be under any other regulations. Your manufactures are here indispensable requisites of existence. Do not drive us to attempt making them for ourselves. We have wood and corn; we can raise seed and tobacco, to give you in return. Exchange labour and productions with us, instead of foreigners and rivals. So shall all things abound to all, both of you and ourselves, and not only in peace, but also during wars, where almost half the age of men and nations appears to be consumed; and so shall happiness and content follow us, and remain and abide with our fellow labourers at home, knowing that ill required, or vainly solicited employment are no longer their fate and prospect; but that the Colonies will at once increase the abundance of food, and the materials and the demand for labour, and at the same time diminish the number of hands to work and of mouths to be filled, and that the poorest may look forward to emigration as a good provision for their children, through centuries to come.

Such are the wants and prayers of the emigrants; such the number and importance, and such the increase of population in the country, to which they go for employment and settlement. See next what they will there find to do, and what resources that country offers, and what advances it has already made in commerce and production.

PRODUCE OF THE FORESTS.

The most important object of industry, as the first and most striking feature in the appearance of the country, is the forest, the lofty, thick, and unmeasured forest; all unplanted by the hand of man, and where, without having strowed or sown, he has only to enter and reap, and gather in, what nature, through many years, has been so bountifully preparing for his use. It is the benevolent supposition of some naturalists, that whatever changes have taken place in the formation of the globe, were such as necessary to render it fit for the habitation of man; and certainly the wisdom and kindness of such a Providence is evidently to be recognized in its latest work, of clothing this portion of the new continent with such continued groves of tall and massy trees, so congenial to the subsistence of the human race, in its earliest stages, and so favourable to the succeeding introduction of the arts and discipline of civilized life. For even the wild animals, harboured in the woods, are those whose flesh is very grateful to the taste, and whose furs and skins are useful for the raiment of men; and besides the trees whose fruits are esculent, there are others distilling juices sweeter than the sugar canes of India; and these things, which were articles of necessity to the savage, continue, and even become more valuable, as luxuries, to the rich and refined society, while of all materials for manufacture, none is so primary and universal as timber, which, even when consumed to ashes, ceases not to be convertible to the wants and comforts of mankind.

In the present, as in similar investigations, it is unfortunate, that more extensive or accurate information of the whole trade and industry of a community can rarely be procured, than what is found in the Custom House returns of exports to other countries. The science of political economy, which, like other inductions, ought to be founded on a thorough collection, analysis, and comparison of facts, has, as yet, been principally concerned in the invention of theories and abstractions, with scarce any other sources of information or proof, than the returns of revenue, population, and maritime trade. That which is generally of most importance, internal commerce and production, being least regarded. In the northern colonies, two of the necessities of life, shelter and fuel, are almost entirely supplied from within their own woods; the amount of that industry, however, must be left to conjecture; but for food and clothes, and their many comforts and refinements, the forests are now almost useless except by intercourse and exchange with distant countries.

This is that timber trade, the subject of so much obloquy, to what may be termed the speculative interests, whose industry consists in abstractions, utility in promises, who alone accuse this trade, and whose only grievance from it, is, that it interferes with their theories, and disproves their conclusions. This is that timber trade, which, contrary to all their dogmas, has for five and twenty years given employment and wealth to colonists, emigrants, ship-owners, and manufacturers; enabling them to exchange labour and commodities with each other, and husbanding and retaining among us all the profits and proceeds, some twenty or thirty millions of money, which would else have been given away to aliens and rivals, for nothing, but what we have been then able to produce for ourselves. This is that timber trade, by which the maritime supremacy of this country has been sustained, new markets created for her manufactures, an asylum and provision found for her surplus population, the requisites of existence, and the number of recipients multiplied, and, at the same time, a large revenue, nearly one-twelfth of the whole customs, levied, without difficulty, evasion, or complaint, without impeding any industry, bearing upon

any distress, or causing any scarceness. This is that timber trade, which has made supplies to consumers more constant and more abundant, which has broken down the Baltic monopoly, reduced its price from above twelve pounds (the average of 1809, 10 and 11, or from six pounds and sixteen shillings on the average of 1806, 7 and 8, exclusive of duty), to which, though the foreigner (upon an average of twelve years preceding 1811, compared with the average of the last seven years,) continues to bring hither nearly as much, he is compelled to sell at one third the price, the Colonies having more than doubled the supply, and, by the most frugal and industrious competition, reduced profits to the lowest rate.

Of all divisions of this trade, the production and exports of deals is now becoming the most important; and this is the sole portion of the business to which any application of machinery can be rendered available. An attempt has been recently made in some of the Colonies, to ascertain the amount of industry and capital engaged in this employment, and the quantity and value of deals yearly produced. This has been done with great care and detail in New Brunswick; in Lower Canada the number only of mills has been returned. The internal consumption of deals must of course be great in a country where, excepting the principal towns, almost every building is of wood. But the capital invested in mills must not be mistaken for all the amount of property embarked in the whole timber trade. In the account so minutely made for New Brunswick, the estimate of buildings, wharves, canals, coves, and other outlays and establishments necessary for carrying on the trade, is for some counties appraised at three or four times the value of the mills; and upon the best information to be obtained, there has appeared, except in the assertion of certain writers, who have neither experience nor evidence to support them, no reason to apprehend any exaggeration in the estimate heretofore made, that the whole property embarked in, or dependant upon the timber trade exceeds two millions sterling.

MAPLE SUGAR.

There is among the productions of the forest one to be mentioned, not so much on account of its value, though that is more than commonly supposed, as for its curiosity, viz. sugar extracted by evaporation from sap of a species of the maple, *acer saccharinum*, a large and shadowy tree, much admired for the beauty of its tints in autumn, and much esteemed as timber, for strength, weight, and closeness of grain, its wavy fibre, and susceptibility of polish. The quantity of sugar thus made annually in Lower Canada has been stated, on the best authority,* at 24,329 cwt., to which there cannot be added less than 6,000 for the production of all the other provinces, making the whole amount, of

Sugar	lbs.	3,396,848
Value, 3d.		£42,460 12s.

THE FUR TRADE.

Under the same class of productions may be included the furs, or peltries of those wild animals which are bred and captured in the forests. In this trade consists the chief and almost only industry and commerce, by which the native Indians contribute anything to the common stock and exchange of the requisites for human existence. Combining amusement, hazard, profit, and gain; this pursuit seems the principal charm of the savage life; nor perhaps has the civilized state any labour so agreeable, though the occupation of a fisherman may resemble it most. A portion of this peltry is also procured by the colonists, not indeed as a separate business, except in Hudson's Bay, but in other parts, they make traps, which lie in wait while the plants labour or sleep; and hold fast their prey till they return to secure the spoils.

SHIP BUILDING.

To the forest also must be ascribed whatever of Colonial industry is engaged in the building of ships; once a very ample and lucrative employment, afterwards, from the decline of maritime interests in England, the cause of much bankruptcy, and distress, but now, in some measure beginning to revive, and being conducted with greater skill and profusion, it not only supplies the losses, and quins the increase, of navigation in those provinces, but answers again, in a very limited degree, as a remuneration to the manufacturers of the United Kingdom.

Some portion of the new ships built in 1831 was for remittance, or sale, in the United Kingdom, and other British ports. Indeed the Canadian journals, in enumerating and appraising their exports for that year, ascribe to this purpose the whole tonnage built at Quebec, and estimate the value at ten pounds a ton.—Upon very good information it appears, that about an equal amount was constructed for the same object in the lower ports. The whole shipping, therefore, to be set down among productions of the forest exported, will be of the value and quantity succeeding:

New Ships.		£65,000
Tons, 6,500 at £10	Sterling	£59,500
Aggregate Value of Exports the produce of Forests.		
Timber and Ashes	£1,038,134 12 5	
Furs and Peltries	211,106 4 2	
New Ships	59,500 0 0	
		Sterling £1,307,640 16 7

These exports are almost all carried to, and exchanged in, the United Kingdom and British West Indies. What the nature of that exchange is, and who the carriers, are interesting questions, hereafter to be examined. In the mean time, to illustrate the extent and value of this division of Colonial industry, and the character of the system, by which it has been created and fostered, let a comparison be made of the amount, above given, with the statement to follow, of similar exports during the same years, from the whole States of America.

*See the splendid topographical description of the British North American Colonies, by Joseph Bouchet, Esquire, Surveyor General of Lower Canada.

†Official returns. Hinton, Reus's Statistics.